A LETTER TO TOBIAS SMOLLET, *M.D.* OCCASIONED By his CRITICISM Upon a late Translation of *TIBULLUS.* By Dr. GRAINGER.

1087. e. 27
7

Whoever he be, tho' this to ſome may ſeem a ſlight Conteſt, I ſhall yet continue to think that Man full of other ſecret Injuſtice, and deceitful Pride, who ſhall offer in public to aſſume the Skill, tho' it be but of a Tongue which he hath not, and would catch his Readers to believe of his Ability, that which is not in him. MILTON.

LONDON:

Sold by T. KINNERSLY, in St. *Paul's Church-yard.*

M.DCC.LIX.

[Price 6 *d.*]

A LETTER TO TOBIAS SMOLLET, M.D.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

SIR,

AS no Man can expect any very extenſive Share of Literary Fame, ſolely, from the Applauſe of his Friends; ſo neither, on the other Hand, with the intelligent and impartial, has he much to apprehend, from the pointleſs Sneers, and malevolent Attacks of his Enemies. But, as there are many Readers who ſeldom venture to judge for themſelves, or, even, to peruſe a Work until they are informed of its Character; for the Benefit of ſuch, I have thought it neceſſary, to point out ſome remarkable Inſtances of your Candour, Taſte, and profound Erudition in the Account you have given of my Verſion of *Tibullus*. By this Diſcuſſion, I ſhall only illuſtrate, but cannot hope to add any Thing to your Reputation as a Critic; your unwarped Integrity, Good-nature, Politeneſs, and delicate Alluſions, but above all your Talent of as ſeldom judging truly of what you do read, as of reading what you pretend to judge, are already ſufficiently known. For, indeed, next to *Zoilus*, you Dr. *Tobias Smollet* are allowed to be the greateſt of Critics.

Were I to indulge myſelf in any Range, ſo innumerable are the Inſtances to be culled out of your Part of the *Critical Review*, in Proof of this general Opinion, that

To tell them would a Hundred Tongues require,
Or one vain Wits that would a Hundred tire.

I ſhall therefore confine myſelf ſimply to your Remarks on my Tranſlation of *Tibullus*. It happens indeed, luckily for me, that this Article of Half a Sheet is as replete with Erudition, Good-manners, and exquiſite Taſte, as any of the ſame Size in your *Annals* of Literature.

I ſhall wave all Cavils on your Account of the general Character of *Tibullus*; and paſs over the Muſter-roll of Critics, whom you have pompouſly cited in his Favour, many of whoſe Writings I know you never ſaw, having been indebted for their very Names to *Broekhuſius*, whom you ſo much affect to deſpiſe. Neither ſhall I enter into any Diſcuſſions with you, on the Reaſons which induced me to prefer the *Heroic Meaſure* to the *Alternate Stanza*; but ſhall faithfully accompany you through all your other Remarks. This, indeed, is not the pleaſing Office of tracing a candid Obſerver through the agreeable Intricacies of manly Criticiſm: No, Sir, it is Juſtice, diſagreeably obliged, to expoſe your Ignorance and Malignity to the Contempt of Mankind.

" The Doctor (the Words are yours) has pre-
" fixed to the Work a Life of *Tibullus, gleaned from*
" *his Writings*; in which Life we find very little
" either to inform, intereſt, or amuſe the Reader."

In this, perhaps, you may have ſtumbled on the Truth, the Lives of polite Scholars, who affect Solitude, affording, in general, very little, that is either amuſing or inſtructive. Yet, before you had paſſed this Sentence on that Part of my Work, was it not incumbent upon any other but a Critic of your

Stamp,

Stamp, to have ſhewn, either, that a better Life of *Tibullus* had already been publiſhed; or that the Materials which I had taken Pains to *glean*, *not from his own Writings only*, but alſo from the Works of others, in more judicious Hands would have produced a Life of greater Information? Self-praiſe, however agreeable, is the moſt awkward Kind of Flattery, yet, as you, modeſt Sir, have ſo amply authorized the Practice by your own *Example*; I will venture to affirm, that none of the old Lives of *Tibullus*, nor even thoſe written by the Learned Dr. *Cruſius*, or Mr. *Dart*, are ſo exact, or intereſting, as that, which I have given to the Public.

" Nay, add you, the Author will not allow him " *ever* to have been *poor*, although, He himſelf " expreſly tells us ſo in theſe Words,

Me, mea PAUPERTAS *vitæ traducat inerti.*

" And deſcribes Himſelf, on many Occaſions, as a " Perſon *reduced to the Condition of an indigent* " *Husbandman*. His Reaſons for believing *Tibullus* " was not poor, are *curious* and *ſingular*. *He was* " *of Equeſtrian Order, and patronized by Meſſala.*"

Altho', neither Riches, nor Poverty, ſhould influence us in our Opinions of Men; yet ſome Biographers, as well as others, having aſſerted, that our Roman Knight was, by his Debaucheries, reduced to Indigence; a Regard to his Memory did oblige me to take ſome Pains to prove from his own Works, and thoſe of others, that the Diminution of his Fortune, which he now and then complains of, was, indeed, an Honour to him; having been, chiefly, occaſioned by his Adherence to what he judged to be the true Intereſt of his Country. But notwithſtanding his vaſt paternal Eſtate was thus glorioſly impaired, it appears, from many * Paſſages in

* Vid. the Life.

his Poems, and alſo from *Horace*, who expreſly ſays to him,

Di tibi DIVITIAS *dederunt, artemq; fruendi,*

that *Tibullus* was never indigent. To theſe Proofs, which to moſt other People would have appeared abundantly cogent, but which you have very honeſtly paſſed over, I did add, by Way of Collateral Evidence, that the rich and beneficent *Meſſala* would not have ſuffered ſo fine a Genius, and one whom he regarded ſo much as *Tibullus*, to have languiſhed in Want. To diſprove which, you ſubjoin, " But if " the Doctor had the Curioſity to examine the Inha- " bitants of the *Fleet*, and the *King's Bench* Priſons, " he would find among them diverſe Individuals of " *Equeſtrian Dignity*, and even ſome *Wits* that are " patronized by *Miniſters*. *Cervantes* was in high " Reputation with the *Miniſters* of *Philip* the Third " of *Spain*, when he died a *Beggar* at *Madrid*. We " might inſtance one of the firſt *Geniuſes* of the " Age, whom we knew almoſt *ſtarving* amidſt the " *Careſſes* of the *Great*."

I muſt own, indeed, that I never was in either of theſe *Priſons*; yet I muſt have been wholly unacquainted with Life, not to have known, that both *Wits*, and Men of *Equeſtrian Dignity*, are, many Times, pent up in thoſe Regions of Wretchedneſs. But, Sir, before this melancholy Truth could have proved any Thing to your Purpoſe, you ought to have ſhewn, that the Connexion between *Cervantes* and the *Spaniſh* Miniſters; and between the *Engliſh* Nobility and your great *Genius*, was of the ſame Nature, as that which cemented our Poet, and his generous Patron. Nay, allowing the full Force of your Objection, you have not yet invalidated my Arguments; for, at the Time, *Tibullus* wrote, PAUPERTAS, the Word on which you lay your chief Streſs, did often ſignify Mediocrity of Fortune, not Indigence,

Indigence; and in that first Sense, it must be taken, in the Line you have quoted, as my Note on it sufficiently proves. Besides, ought not Experience to have informed you, that Indigence will not admit of the *Vita iners?*

But, to cut this Controversy short; any *Westminster* Boy in the third Form could have told you, that "*No Person could enjoy the Equestrian Privileges at* "Rome, *whose Estate did not, at least, amount to* "3000 l. *Sterling:*" A Sum, which I presume, you will allow sufficient to raise a Philosophical Man, greatly above the *Condition of an indigent Husbandman.*

And now, most singular Critic! what have you to alledge in Defence of your Learning? You, who have so generously *tasked* * *your universally acknowledged Abilities*, (as you modestly express it) *to revive the true Spirit of Criticism, and vindicate the Cause of Literature from wretched Hirelings, without Talent, Candour, Spirit and Circumspection.* But this Instance of your profound Knowledge in literary Matters, tho' *curious*, is not *singular* in one who metamorphosed a petrified Embryo into an eminent Writer on Midwifry. Many other Proofs of your profound Erudition shall be given in the Sequel.

§ 2. By this Time, I fancy, good Dr. *Tobias*, that little Ceremony is required between us. I shall, therefore, examine those Specimens you have produced in Proof of my not having found it "an easy "Task to render *Tibullus* into elegant and harmo-"nious Numbers." Who that knows our Poet ever imagined it to be an easy Task? Indeed Sir, whatever Inducements I had to translate this Author, I found it extremely difficult barely to do him Justice. But to our Examen. Your first Specimen is,

---

* *Vid.* Plan of the *C. Review.*

These

" These Vulturs tear the Bow'ls, and drink the
" Gore."

Altho' you have not * quoted my Line fairly, I must confess that the one you should have quoted, is not unexceptionable: But that the Story there alluded to, " should be mistaken, as you wittily " query, for a Scene like that of the *Bloody Bowl*, " in *Hanging Sword Alley*," is what, those who are not endowed with your Conundrum Genius, will never be able to comprehend.

" Naked thou † *stands*, expos'd to wintery Snows!
" Naked thou *stands*, when fervid Sirius glows!"

" This Repetition, observe you, of *stands* for " *stand'st*, is a double Solecism *notwithstanding*."

Suppose now, you had imputed this double Solecism, as you term it, to an Error of the Press? You, Sir, who have had so much to do with that Engine of Literature, must know, from many Years Experience, that no Accuracy can secure a Writer from its Mistakes. But, as this was an Indulgence I could not expect from you, I rather chuse to refer you to the ERRATA, where p. 46. you will find your *double Solecism* properly corrected.

What now, most candid Sir, is the Reader to think of your solemn Professions, *never to condemn, or extol, without having first* CAREFULLY *perused the* § *Performance*. But I forget, — How the other

---

* We will not misquote the Words of any Author, who may fall under our Inspection. *Vid.* Plan of the *C. Review*.

† Nudus et hybernæ producis frigora Brumæ,
Nudus et æstivi tempora sicca Canis. TIBULL.

§ This accurate Critic in his Account of a late ingenious Treatise on Health, arraigns the Author for not having taken Notice of Dr. *Armstrong*'s Poem on that Subject: A Blunder it is plain, he could not have fallen into, had he *read* the *Book*, as Dr. *Mackenzie* does ample Justice to the Merits of that elegant Performance.

Members

Members of your Society of Gentlemen Critics may have acted in this Respect, I shall not at present point out; you Sir, it is obvious, have long since shewed the Town, that you regard these *solemn Professions* as Words of Course. To peruse a new Work with Accuracy, so as to give the Public a just Character of it, does, it must be owned, require some Time, of which, those must be very thrifty, whose daily Bread depends on writing by the Hour Glass. You, Dr. *Tobias*, in particular, are so sensible of the Necessity of being an Œconomist of Time, that, tho' the continuing your Review, affords a monthly Opportunity of discharging on Paper not a little of your superabundant Good-nature; and obliges several Writers to pay you Tribute, somewhat like that, which was formerly paid by the more pacific *Highlanders*, to some ferocious Chieftain; yet, as the Work itself contributes little or nothing toward the heavy Article of House-keeping, so sick are you grown of it, that it can be proved, "*Authors have* "*been solicited to send Characters of their own Works,* "*which doubtless not a few have complied with, to be* "*inserted in your immortal Annals of Literature.*" Let the World then judge, what Impartiality is to be expected from a Work patched up in this Manner! and how far such a *Reservoir*, as in the Plan you are pleased to call your Review, will *dignify the liberal Arts, and contribute toward the Formation of a public Taste.*

"How soon the * Steed to Age's Stiffness yields!
"So late a Victor in th' Olympic Fields!"

---

* Quam jacet infirmæ VENERE ubi fata Senectæ!
Qui prius Eleo carcere missus equus. TIBULL.

Altho'

Altho' the Object here described did require a correspondent *Tardiness* in the Expression; I will not take upon me to assert, that, even in this mechanical Respect, it equals the original. Yet, this, most delicate-eared Dr. I will venture to say, that, had I ever published such a Couplet as the following one of yours, which you very generously tender me in Lieu of one of * mine, my whole Version ought to be burnt by the common Hangman of *Apollo*. Your Couplet is,

> " *The Boys, and Youths, in Crowds around him*
> " *throng*:"

This, no Doubt, is spirited, flowing, and beautifully circumstantial! But then, in crawls a wounded Snake, whose slow Length you have humanely hacked into sixteen good Pieces.

> " *Each consecrates himself with Spittle, as the*
> " *Spectre moves along*."

This truly *Smolletian* Couplet, and above all, this *Spectre* of a Line, more than *consecrates* my Lines,

---

* My Couplet is,

At such preposterous Love, each School-Boy sneers,
SHUNS AS AN OMEN; or pursues with Fleers.

Which in the Original runs thus:

Hunc puer, hunc juvenis arta circumferit turba;
DESPUIT IN MOLLES, ET SIBI QUISQUE SINUS.

Now, DESPUIT not being to be rendered literally into elegant *English*, I paraphrased it in my Version, but explained its literal Meaning in the following Note. Spitting, the Ceremony used in the Text, was supposed a preservative against bad Omens, and is a gentler Method, than those prescribed by the profound Authors of the 15th and 16th Centuries, as Charms against Witchcraft, which was to give a Gash with a Knife, on any Part of the Face, above the Organs of Respiration. But how elegantly has my *Labio* of a Corrector introduced *Spittle* into his Couplet, and how wonderfully has he metamorphosed *an old Man in Love* into a *Spectre!*

" and

and indeed might conſecrate a *Moravian* Hymn, from your Spittle: and ſhews, that if I write Notes in the *Dutch* Taſte, you, Sir, are poſſeſſed of the *Batavian* Ear, ſo much celebrated by *Martial*; and are fully inſtructed in the Uſe of your Fingers in Verſification.

" That my Suſpicion's falſe, 'tis true, ſhe ſwears;
" And backs her Imprecations with her Tears."

After quoting the Original, you add,

" True it is Pity, Pity 'tis, 'tis true."

What this may mean, or whether in *Truth* it means any thing, I cannot determine: And yet, methinks, it is a *Pity*, that ſo *ingenious* an Effort at * *Parody*, the Thing in the World Nature ſeems to have fitted you the moſt for, ſhould be ſo *utterly incomprehenſible*. But it is the Misfortune of ſuch *great Wits as you*, not always to level their *Irony* to the Underſtanding of the Vulgar.

" Nor yet be chaſte from mean *unamorous* Fear."

It is granted, that the Adjective in Italics is not the literal Meaning of *ſævus* in the Original: But it plainly appearing from the Context, that *Tibullus* was deſirous his *Miſtreſs* ſhould be faithful to him from *Love*, and not from *Fear*; I did hazard *unamorous*, which nobody who underſtands *Engliſh* can miſtake the Meaning of, and no one, that has an Ear the leaſt turned for Verſification, will term unharmonious.

---

* There is not, perhaps, any Species of Writing which requires leſs Force of Genius, Learning, or Capacity, than *Parody*; the Writer having nothing more to do than to ſubſtitute a *ridiculous* Image in the Place of a *grand* or *noble* one, and a *low* and *vulgar* Phraſe, or Expreſſion, in the Room of a lofty and poetical one. *C. Review, Vol.* 1.

" The Floor tread *noiſeleſs*, *noiſeleſs* turn the Key."

Upon which, you obſerve, " better turn the *Key*, " even tho' the Lock was not *oiled*, than pronounce " this Line, enriched with a *new* Word; which, " though repeated, we are afraid the Public will re- " ject as not *Sterling*."

What a *Prodigy* of Archneſs you are, good Dr. Toby? And how cruel is it in you, thus without Diſtinction to play off your *Hypercritical Smartneſs?* What have poor *Shakeſpear* and *Dryden* done to offend your Mightineſs?

The firſt of theſe Poets expreſſes himſelf thus,

——— On our quick'ſt Decrees,
Th' inaudible, and *noiſeleſs* Foot of Time
Steals ere we can effect them.

And *Dryden* alſo, *unfortunately* it ſeems, makes uſe of the ſame Word.

So *noiſeleſs* would I live, ſuch Death to find,
Like timely Fruit, not ſhaken by the Wind,
But ripely dropping like the ſapleſs Bough.

And, not to quote others, the elegant and accurate Mr. *Gray* is ſo unlucky as to uſe two your proſcribed Words in one Line *.

They kept the *noiſeleſs Tenour* of their Way.

Hence, it appears, that your Obſervations with regard to the Word *noiſeleſs*, would be really *new* in any but ſuch a maſterly Critic as you; and will be received as *Sterling* by none, but your little Band of implicit Admirers!

" While cluſtering Grapes, or Wheat-wreaths " round your Hair."

Whatever Objection a delicate Ear might make to the Harmony of this Line, you Dr. *Tobias Smollet*,

* *Vid. El. in a Country Church-yard.*

who

who recommend the following Stanza, in the ſame Number wherein I am condemned, ought, methinks, to be ſilent.

Here lies *Arioſt*. *Arabian* Perfumes ſweet
Ye gentle Breezes o'er his Tomb ſpread round,
Tomb, to enjoy immortal Honours meet:
But humble Spot for Body ſo renown'd!
With Incenſe, happy Bones, and Flowers replete,
May ye remain, ever adorn'd and crown'd,
&c. &c.

But the Tranſlator of *Tibullus* has no Country Seat, ſome fifty Miles from *London*; and if he had one, has been accuſtomed to too good Company, ever to dream of entertaining with Claret and Veniſon, ſuch * *Authorlings* as you know, in their Summer and Holiday Excurſions.——*And have you ſtill, no Connexions to warp your Integrity? No Prejudices, to influence your Judgment? Will nothing induce you to part with your Independence? And have you always declared your Thoughts without Prejudice and Affection, forgetting the Author's Perſon, while his Works fell under your † Conſideration.* But Dr. you ſpoke more truly, when you ſaid, you hazarded no Reputation in praiſing the *Engliſh* Tranſlation of § *Arioſto*, as one of the beſt in our Language.

 " In

---

* *Vid.* Firſt Vol. of the *C. Review.*

† *Vid.* Preface to the firſt Vol. of the *Critical Review.*

§ The OBSERVER OBSERVED, is a *mean*, and *ſcurrilous Abuſe* of Mr. *Warton.*—But we will not *militate againſt Neſcience. C. Review*, firſt Vol. Now the very Author of the *Obſerver obſerved*, is *another Spencer*; *fights in a poliſhed Suit of Engliſh Armour*; is poſſeſſed of a *Delicacy peculiar* to himſelf; is a *maſterly Hand*, not only directed by a perfect Knowledge of the Original, but, what is more extraordinary, that Hand is *warmed with an enthuſiaſtic Veneration for* Arioſto. *C. Review*, Vol. 3. What cannot Veniſon do?

" In Arms *redoubtable*, let others ſhine."

And again,

" And with Incentives ſly, the *Feud* ſupplies."

Upon theſe Lines you obſerve, with your *uſual Knowledge* in Philology, " *Redoubtable* is *French*, and " *Feud* a *Scotch* Term."

But alas! moſt accurate *Word-Genealogiſt*, you are again out of your Depth. — An Author no leſs pure than Mr. *Pope* has naturalized * *Redoubtable*: And as to your *Scotch* Term, not only the celebrated *Butler*, but Mr. *Addiſon* alſo uſes it, both in his Proſe-writings, and in his *Cato*. In his *Freeholder*, a Work, which one who pretends to write of *Engliſh Rebellions* would do well to read, he has this Sentence; " In former Ages, it was a conſtant Policy " of *France*, to raiſe and cheriſh inteſtine FEUDS " and Diſcord, in the Iſle of *Great Britain*." And again, in the noble Dramatic Poem abovementioned, he thus makes *Lucius* ſpeak,

——— *Scythia* mourns
Our guilty Wars, and *Earth*'s remoteſt Regions
Are half unpeopled by the FEUDS of *Rome*.

And now, accurate Dr. are not you of that very Claſs of Critics, whom you characterize as *ferocious Huſſars, ſkirmiſhing on the Skirts of Dulneſs, and her Phalanx, who are ſudden, raſh, impetuous and deſperate, ſlaſhing away at Random, without Order, Skill, Pity, and Remorſe?* †

" Riſe happy Morn, without a Cloud ariſe!
" This Morn, *Cornutus* bleſt his Mother's Eyes."

---

* *Vid. Pope's* Letters.
† *C. Review*, Vol. 1.

Now

Now for the very Quinteſſence of Criticiſm! "Who "would ever dream, that this was intended as a "Tranſlation of two Words *venit natalis?* Beſides, "we apprehend, add you, with a Waggery almoſt "peculiar to yourſelf, that if *Cornutus* was a good "Boy, he might have bleſſed his Mother's Eyes, "aye, and *deſerved* her *Bleſſing*, every Day of the "Year, as well as on his Birth-day."

Moſt excellent Droll! While you thus endeavour to raiſe the Laugh, you only tread in the Footſteps of your Predeceſſors, the *Witlings* of the *laſt Age*. *Dryden* had wrote in his State of Innocence,

Seraph and Cherub careleſs of their Charge,
And wanton in full Eaſe, now live at large,
Unguarded leave the Paſſes of the Sky,
And all *diſſolv'd* in *Hallelujahs* lie.

Upon which laſt Line, ſome of the Dr. *Toby Smollets* of that Time obſerved, that *they had heard of Anchovies diſſolved in Sauce, but never of an Angel in Hallelujahs*. On this witty Cenſure the excellent Author remarks, "there is SOME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LAUGHER AND A CRITIC: And adds, they might as well have ridiculed my Maſter *Virgil* for

Invadunt *Urbem* ſomno, vinoq; *ſepultam:*

as alſo Mr. *Cowley* when he writes,

Where their vaſt Courts the *Mother-waters* keep;

for if the Maſs of Waters be the *Mothers*, then their *Daughters* the *little Streams* are bound, in all good Manners, to make *Court'ſy* to them, and aſk them *Bleſſing*." Thus, the Reader may diſcern, how eaſy it is to turn into Ridicule, the moſt glowing Deſcriptions, when one is in the Humour of it, 'till he *wheezes* again at his own dull Jeſt. But beautiful Imagery ſtrongly painted, will be Poetry ſtill, and outlive any petulant Attempt to make it ridiculous.

As

As to the two Adjectives, *untimorous*, and *uncovetous*, upon which you have clapped your Inquisitorial Seal, Mr. *Johnson*, an unexceptionable Judge, thus expresses his Opinion of the *English* privative Particle *Un*,

" It is placed ALMOST AT WILL, before " *Adjectives*, and *Adverbs*."

On this Occasion, Sir, permit me seriously to advise you, frequently to consult that noble Work, the *English Dictionary*, in 2 Vol. Fol. for if you are still obstinately determined to pass Sentence on Books, it will save you from a World of *ignorant Criticism*.

As in the Jaundice, all Objects are supposed to appear yellow; so, we know, the Ear is sometimes so preter-naturally braced, as to convey, to the common Sensory, the softest Sounds, *grating harsh Thunder*, as *Milton* expresses it. And to this disease, however unfrequent, I have great Reason to believe that you poor Dr. *Tobias*, are, at Times unfortunately subject. How else could you have objected to the Versification of the following Lines?

" The Statues of the Gods wept tepid Tears."

To which you, in the true Spirit of Mr. *Dryden*'s *Anchovy Critic*, subjoin, " *O sad*." Yet *sad* as it may be, the Original says neither more nor less.

Et simulacra Deûm lacrimas fudisse tepentes.

In one *sad* * *Tenour* my *Existence flows?*

To this Line you do not openly object on Account of Harmony; you bring a heavier Charge against it. " Suppose, say you, this Metaphor was re- " ferred to the Examination of another Art, namely, " Painting; how would the Artist represent *Ex-* " *istence* flowing in a sad Tenour?——As there is

* Tenour being derived from the Latin *Tenor*, literally signifies a Continuance, or constant Course. Vid. *Ainsworth*.

no

" no ſuch Figure, nor Sentiment, nor any Thing like
" it in the Original, we would adviſe the Author in
" the next Edition, to refer the Thought to the Te-
" nour in Muſic, and write,

" In one ſad Tenor my Affliction blows."

What a Pity it is, that all this critical Archneſs ſhould be thrown away?——When you, Sir, can inform me, how *Exiſtence* itſelf is to be repreſented on Canvaſs, perhaps, I may begin to doubt of the Senſe of this Line; but even then, you muſt not expect me, to degrade myſelf ſo far, as to adopt your *ſagacious* Alteration. To ſhew you, however, your deep Knowledge in critical Matters, I muſt obſerve, that while you ridicule my Line, you likewiſe unwarily attack no leſs a Writer than Mr. *Pope*; for that correct Poet has given a Sanction to the Image, in the following Couplet,

Shall Fortune ſtill *in one ſad Tenour run?*
And ſtill encreaſe the Woes ſo ſoon begun?

Nor is this Mode of Expreſſion peculiar to the *Engliſh* Language, the *Romans* alſo uſed it in the *Auguſtan* Age; thus one of their fineſt Poets writes,

An gravis INCEPTUM PERAGIT Fortuna TENOREM?

And now, Dr. *Toby*, what have you to object to theſe Authorities?—You ſee that a ſincere Intention to find Fault, is not the ſole Quality, of which a *Critic* on the Verſion of *Tibullus*, ſhould be poſſeſſed. ——But, ſince, you have ſtarted this Subject, I muſt obſerve, that altho' the Method of reducing Poetical Images to Painting, is an infallible Way of expoſing the Incongruity of mixed Metaphors, when drawn from material Objects, yet the Empire of the Pencil over *Compoſition*, is not ſo univerſal, as you, Sir, imagine; for not to plunge you beyond your

Depth

Depth into this Metaphyſical Speculation, you are to know, that abſtracted Ideas, (and ſuch an Idea is *Exiſtence*) are not ſubjected to its mimical Powers.

The Rule, however, being of extenſive Utility, let us bring you, Sir, to its critical Examen, and try, whether, even you, with all your Self-ſufficiency, are not arraignable for the very *Fault*, of which you accuſe others.

You, gravely, take down *Sanadon*'s *Horace* from your Shelf, and finding

Quod ſi me *lyricis vatibus inſeras*
Sublimi feriam ſidera vertice

thus tranſlated, Mais ſi Mecene veut bien me *placer* au *rang* des poetes liriques, ſon ſuffrage me mettra par avance, en poſſeſſion de l' immortalite; which, after rendering into *Engliſh*, as *Perrault* did the Antients, you thus proceed: Is not this changing *the Idea*, and degrading a *Metaphor* of *noble Simplicity?*—And therefore to do Juſtice to the much injured Poet, you, out of your great Care for his Fame, thus tranſlate the Lines,

But if you *plant* me * among the Lyric Bards
My *verdant Boughs* will ſtretch aloft to Heaven:

" This fine Image, continue you, *Sanadon* and " his implicit Followers have *ſunk* into that of " electing a *Country Church-warden*." But, accurate Tranſlator! have you mended the Matter, to talk to you in your own Way, by making the *Prime Miniſter* of *Auguſtus*, a *Country Gardiner?*

After all, let the Reader put this *fine*, this *noble*, this *ſimple Metaphor* upon Canvaſs, and then, I preſume, our little fat *Venuſian Bard*, *planted* among the

* To preſerve the Integrity of the Figure, *Horace* ſhould have been *planted* in a Grove, and not among Lyric Poets: But the Truth is, that excellent Bard was too good a Critic to join a Fiſhes Tail to a Human Head.

Lyric

Lyric Poets of *Greece*, and ſtretching aloft his *verdant Boughs* to Heaven, like *Phaeton*'s Siſters in *Ovid*, will make but a ludicrous Figure! Neither would this Image do in *Latin*, more than in *Engliſh*. But to put an End to this Subject, I muſt tell you, that *inſeras* in the Original, is derived from *inſero*, *ui*, *to rank with*, *or place among*, *&c.* and not from *inſero*, *inſevi*, to *plant*, &c. as you, to *preſerve* your *noble* and *ſimple Figure* have thought proper to render it. *Sanadon* therefore and *his implicit Followers*, as you call Mr. *Francis*, *and others*, *have properly tranſlated* * *that Paſſage*. How complete a Set of *Critical Canons* might not be extracted from your *Annals* of *Literature?*——*And will you ſtill not venture to criticiſe a Tranſlation, without underſtanding the* † *Original?*

" The bleſſed Gods, you know, I ne'er revil'd,
" And Naught *iniquous* e'er my Heart defil'd."

Perhaps, your Nicety is offended with the Adjective in *Italics*.——I grant you, that *iniquitous* is the common Word; but is there a Reader who underſtands this laſt, to whom the Meaning of iniquous can be a Secret? It is not harſh, and you yourſelf allow it not to be vulgar.

" Nor Africk's Sands, nor Scythia gave the Birth,
" But a compaſſionate, *benignant* Earth."

Your Italic Mark of *Reprobation* being put upon Benignant, that, I preſume, is the Expreſſion which offends your ſcrupulous Exactneſs. We grant, that Benign is the common Term, but why may not benignant, be uſed as well as malignant; a Word, with whoſe Meaning, a Friend of yours ought to be well

---

* But if you *rank* me with the Choir,
Who tun'd with Art the *Grecian* Lyre;
Swift to the nobleſt Heigths of Fame,
Shall riſe thy POETS deathleſs Name. FRANCIS.

† Plan of *Critical Review*.

acquainted, if, having felt in your own Mind its pernicious Effects, could give him a precise Idea of it.

" Now * drunk, they blame their Stars, and curse
" the Maid,
"——But sober, *deprecate whate'er* they said."

On which, you sagaciously observe, " That they " should curse the Maid in their Drink is very na- " tural; but how they should afterwards *deprecate* " whate'er they said, we do not so well conceive. " We have heard of a Man's deprecating the Wrath " of Heaven, but ‖ of his deprecating his own " Words, we cannot see the Propriety. The Ori- " ginal means no more but that they wished *what* " *was done were undone*." *Profound Interpreter!* how your Learning amazes me? But though I do not *conceive* that I shall be able to let you *see* the *Propriety* of *deprecate*, I dare say, every unprejudiced Person will acknowledge its Propriety, when he is informed, that this Verb, in the Sense I here use it, signifies *to ask Pardon for*, which naturally includes in it, the true Meaning of the Original, viz. *the wishing unsaid*, (*not undone*, as you wisely translate it) what had been said before. Nor is this Meaning of the Word unusual; for if you will look, either into *Ainsworth*, or Mr. *Johnson*'s Dictionary, you will find that very Signification of *Deprecate*, particularly specified. But these Books, perhaps, are too dull for one of your *soaring*, *Self-taught* Genius! Let me, however, hope, that you will, some Time, or another, penitently *deprecate that Wrath of Heaven*,

* In this place, the Translator has contracted four Lines of the Original into two in the Version. A Custom he has constantly observed, where any Thing repugnant to good Manners was decribed by his Poet.

‖ We will not invidiously seek to wrest the Sense, or misinterpret the Meaning of any Author. Vid. Plan of the Critical Review.

you

you ſpeak of, for the many, not only *idle*, but *illiberal*, Things, of which you, know yourſelf to be the Author.

" *Rome* that ſhall ſtretch her irreſiſtleſs Reign."

Before this, and ſome other of the Lines already quoted, you, Sir, with much *Archneſs*, have put this *emphatical* Criticiſm, " Ware Grinders." It would, Sir, in me, be deſcending to your own Level, to ſpecify what Treatment *your Grinders* are intitled to, for this moſt *polite* and *ingenious Annotation.*

Thus, Sir, having too minutely perhaps, conſi- your maſterly Remarks on my Verſion, and ſhewn your Truth and Good-manners, your Learning, and Diſintereſtedneſs; has not VANITY ſome Reaſon to exult, that ſuch a *Variety* of *Nothingneſs*, * has been diſcovered, where ſuch Earneſtneſs was manifeſted in the Purſuit? And might not VAIN GLORY be permitted to ſay with Dr. *Young*,

Critics on Verſe, as Squibs on Triumphs wait,
Proclaim the Glory, and augment the State;
Hot, *envious*, *noiſy*, *proud*, *the ſcribbling Fry*,
Burn, *hiſs*, and *bounce*, *waſte Paper*, *ſtink and die.*

But, I will ſuppoſe, that every Word you have condemned, was barbarous; and that every Line you have ſelected, was unharmonious, and even falſe to the Original; ſhould theſe have induced you, Sir, to diſparage a Tranſlation conſiſting of 2000 Lines, and of an Author too, whom you allow to be *difficult*, *original*, and *peculiar*; you, Sir, who at your firſt ſetting out profeſſed, " Never without Re- " luctance, to diſapprove even of a bad Writer, " who had the leaſt Title † to Indulgence."

---

* Critical Review, firſt Volume.

† Vid. Preface to firſt Vol. of Critical Review.

A Critic on a Verſion of *Tibullus*, ought, as far as I can judge, firſt to eſtabliſh that Poet's leading, and characteriſtical Qualities; and then ſhew by *fair* Quotations, how far his Interpreter has or has not done him Juſtice. In this Manner, the ingenious Mr. *Spence* criticiſed *Pope*'s Tranſlation of the *Odyſſey*. But has your Critique, Sir, on *Tibullus* been conducted in the ſame manly diſpaſſionate Way? *And yet, you are one of a Sett of Gentlemen who have long obſerved with Indignation, the Productions of Genius and Dulneſs, Wit and Impertinence, Learning and Ignorance, applauded without Taſte, and condemned without Judgment:* And therefore, you promiſed, *not to exhibit a partial and unfair Aſſemblage of the Blemiſhes of any Production!*

It is now high Time to conſider your Animadverſions on my Notes; but I muſt, firſt, intreat the Reader's Indulgence, while I make ſome ſhort Strictures on the indiſcriminate, and I think very unmerited Cenſure, which you have paſſed upon all our Tranſlations from the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets.

" The great Fault, we conceive, in all our Tranſ-
" lations of the *Latin* and *Greek* Poetry, is a li-
" centious Deviation, not from the Meaning, but
" from the Figures of the Original. Figures are the
" Soul of Poetry, which, if the Tranſlator pre-
" ſumes to change, his Work becomes a ſuppoſi-
" titious Bantling." *Spiritedly conceived*, and elegantly expreſſed! From ſo general a Cenſure I could not certainly expect to ſee my little Labours exempted; and indeed, if *Dryden*, *Addiſon*, *Congreve*, *Garth*, *Pope*, and others, have obtruded on the World *ſuppoſititious Bantlings*, it is the leſs wonderful that I ſhould not be irreproachable on the ſame Score. But how has our Critical *Drawcanſir* made good his unreſtricted Charge? Doubtleſs, by many Proofs from the Verſions of theſe eminent Tranſlators, and eſpecially from that of *Tibullus?* Why truly no! He has

not

not given us one ſingle * Example, unleſs his ſingular Conceit of *planting Horace* among the Lyric Poets of *Greece* may be conſtrued as ſuch. Beſides, — ſhould not your own Experience in the *French* and *Spaniſh* have taught you, that the *Severity* of the *Engliſh Language* often rejects many Images much applauded in *France* and *Spain?* At leaſt I can aſſure you, that there are many bold Figures in *Greek* and *Latin*, which our Mother Tongue dares not naturalize.

Nor does the Severity of the *Engliſh* Language only reject ſome foreign Images, as unfitting to her Manner; but *Decency* likewiſe, and a *Regard* to the Public, muſt oblige a Tranſlator, ſometimes *wholly to omit*, and ſometimes to *alter* the Ideas of his Original. *Tibullus* required much of this *weeding*, which, however otherwiſe inclined to favour him, I ſcrupulouſly performed. If this has offended you, I rejoice in your Diſpleaſure; and that you are offended on this Score, I cannot doubt, when I reflect on what horrid, I had almoſt ſaid infernal Scenes, one of your Intimates has affronted the Public with in *Peregrine Pickle.*

§ 3. In the Beginning of your Article you compare *Tibullus* as commented on by me, to a *Dutch* Fort, whoſe Environs are laid under Water. However elegantly this Compariſon may be applied by the Poet, from whom you had it, yet, on this Occaſion, I muſt make bold to apply to you, what *Falſtaff* ſaid to a much greater Man, *viz. Thou haſt the moſt unſavoury Similes, and art indeed the moſt comparative*, &c. *Critic, I ever heard of.* You then politely call the Notes themſelves " a vaſt Congeries, and a huge " heap of learned Lumber, *moſtly* taken up in Ex- " planations

* The *C. Reviewers* will not preſume to decide upon the Merits of a Work, in an arbitrary Sentence, *unſupported by Evidence.* Vide Plan.

" planations of the Heathen Mythology, which may " be amuſing to Women and Boys." But good Mr. Ware-Grinders Critic, if you had peruſed my Preface with a leſs diſintereſted Attention; or had underſtood *Tibullus*, as well as you would make the World believe, you muſt have obſerved, that few Poets of Antiquity require more Mythological Notes, to render him intelligible to the *Engliſh* Reader.—— The Notes, however, you add, " are taken up " with Quotations from the *Greek*, *Latin*, *Italian*, " and *Engliſh* Poets." Are theſe Notes alſo *moſtly* Mythological? And pray Mr. Hypercritical Dr. is not this one of the approved Ways of commenting on a Poet? Altho' the Sources of Imitation are not near ſo copious as Annotators had long imagined, and a ſameneſs does, by no Means, in many Caſes, imply Plagiariſm; yet, I have commonly heard Men of Taſte allow, that they felt Pleaſure, in reading the correſpondent Thoughts of different Poets on the ſame Subject. If therefore I have erred in this, I have willingly erred; and ſhall hardly alter my Method for all your *redoubtable Ridicule*.

In another Place you call the Notes " Grammatical, Critical and Explanatory, borrowed for the " greateſt Part from *Broekhuſius*, the *Dutch* Editor " of *Tibullus*." Many of the meerly philogical Notes I did take from that Commentator, and put his Name to them: For, having been prevailed on to print the *Latin*, and preferring, upon the Whole, the *Dutchman*'s Text, to every other Editors, was it not incumbent on me, to produce his Reaſons wherever he differed from theſe? Beſides, having myſelf found it neceſſary to alter the Arrangement of ſome Parts of my Author, was not I obliged alſo, to aſſign my Reaſons for theſe Alterations? But the Notes are alſo Critical and Explanatory. How you came to ſtumble upon theſe Epithets I cannot gueſs; you, however, ſoon explain them, thus, away.

" They

" They are jumbled together to very little Purpoſe, " ſeemingly calculated to diſplay the Tranſlators " reading, *rather than to illuſtrate the Senſe and* " *Beauty of the Original.*" But *moſt conſiſtent* Sir, I muſt appeal from your very *impartial* Tribunal, to that of the Public, to whoſe Deciſions I ſhall chearfully ſubmit. Only this, I muſt add, that the Critical and Explanatory Notes *are not*, as you aſſert, *borrowed for the greateſt Part*, from the *Dutchman.*

To ſhew the Importance of my Remarks, you have ſelected three Notes from the firſt Elegy, and one from the Second. I have only to obſerve, that the three firſt you have been pleaſed to amputate, they, therefore appear mutilated in your Review. The other Note is not indeed much mutilated, but is miſinterpreted; for had you not peruſed it with that *Candour* which you have all along ſhewn to my Work, you, who I am told are ſo eminent for *ſneering*, muſt have perceived, *that I forſooth was laughing* at my good Friend the *Dutchman*. But ſuppoſing me as dully ſerious, as you would willingly repreſent me. I am not a little ſuprized, that you, of all Men, ſhould pretend to find Fault with the Image of *Matulam poſcentis?* You, who have ſo often diſtinguiſhed yourſelf by high-flavoured Jokes, and delicate Alluſions, acquired, probably, in ſome ſuch favourite Seminary as *the Bloody Bowl in Hanging Sword Alley*. This is ſo notorious, that any Reader of tolerable Sagacity can eaſily ſmell you out in your *Annals of Literature*, which, for my own Part, I generally treat as the witty *Catullus* uſed the Annals of a certain Predeceſſor of yours called *Valuſius*.

—— venite in ignem
Pleni ruris, et inficetiarum
Annales *Voluſi*, cacata charta.

You

You finiſh your learned Article with an excellent Precept from *Horace*, which, however meant, I take in good Part. Few People are competent Judges of their own Abilities, and thoſe perhaps leaſt of any, who aſpire after any Eminence in Poetry. I did not however, notwithſtanding the Badneſs of Mr. *Dart*'s Tranſlation of *Tibullus*, precipitate the Publication of mine. It would have even perhaps ſtill lain in my Scritoire, had not the ingenious and learned Author of the *Rambler*, after a Peruſal, adviſed me to ſend it to the Preſs. Neither have I hitherto had any Reaſon to repent following that Gentleman's Advice: For notwithſtanding your violent and early Efforts * to diſparage the Work, I have the Satisfaction to know, that it is not condemned by the beſt Judges. But even if *Minerva and the Graces*, as you would inſinuate, have not ſmiled upon my Verſion, this Conſideration I have ſtill left to comfort me, that if I

ſcribble in *Minerva's* Spite,
There are who judge much worſe than I can write.

This is a Truth, of which, from the foregoing Examples, I doubt not every ſenſible Reader is by this Time throughly convinced. Let me therefore, good Dr. *Tobias*, retort the Advice, and aſſure you, that you have egregiouſly miſtaken your Talents in commencing Critic.

And here you muſt permit me to borrow a Metaphor from you, and as the *Reſervoir* † (an Image of exquiſite Propriety!) which *was to diſpel thoſe Miſts of Obſcurity thro' which one People has hitherto beheld another; which was to extend and elevate the Underſtanding; and to unite the more rational Part of our Fellow Creatures in one ſocial Family:* as this won-

* *Tibullus* was publiſhed about the Middle of *December*, and this Criticiſm came out the firſt of *January*.

† See Plan of the *Critical Review*.

derful

derful *Reservoir*, I say, has been demonstrated by different Hands, to be chiefly supplied from the muddy Streams of Ignorance, false Taste, Partiality and Malevolence, let me advise you to lay aside the Office of Turn-cock, in which you have been so unsuccessfully active. Be a Romance or Farce Writer, raise Contributions by another Regicide, translate from the *French*, or, *si Dis placet*, murder the *Spanish*. But henceforth, if you have any Shame left, drop the Rod of *Aristarchus*. Neither, on your Demise as a Critic, vainly console yourself with the Imagination of having died *a Martyr to true Taste and Ingenuity*, the Legality * of your Pretensions to either having been fully disproved.

To conclude, I make no Doubt but in the next Number of the above-mentioned *Mist-dispelling Reservoir* the *Critical Review*, you will modestly consider this *Letter as one of the Testimonies of your Impartiality and Power:* You will also probably variously compound the Terms of *Dunce*, *Poetaster*, *whipt Cur*, and other such Epithets, to which detected Ignorance often has Recourse. But rail on good Dr. *Tobias*, and welcome. Do any thing except praising me, as I intirely join in Opinion with Mr. *Pope*, when he observes that,

Of all mad Creatures, if the Learn'd are right,
It is the Slaver kills, and not the Bite:
A Fool quite angry is quite innocent:
Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they repent.

---

* Preface to the Critical Review.

F I N I S.